INSIDE: DESIGNING GARDEN PATHS ❖ HERITAGE TREES ❖ A NEW PEONY

Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin

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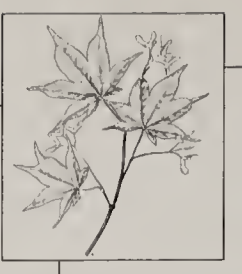

WHERE IN THE ARBORETUM?

Azalea Way

Photo by Joy Spurr

Come visit Washington Park Arboretum in spring. See the azalea 'Pink Ruffles' (above) in May along Azalea Way, above Lake Washington Boulevard East. Ten thousand azaleas and 5,000 rhododendrons represent 730 different cultivars and species of these beautiful plants. You'll find them in bloom somewhere over the 200 acres all twelve months of the year.

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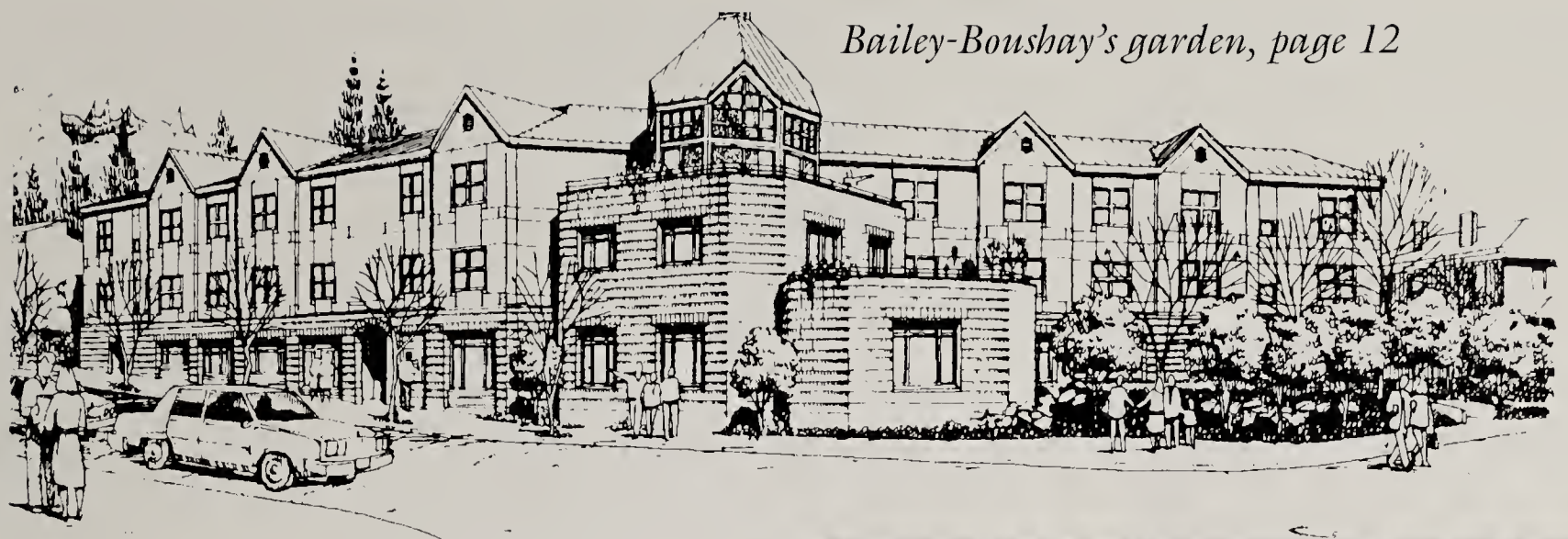
The Arboretum Foundation is a nonprofit organization that was chartered to further Washington Park Arboretum development, projects, and programs through volunteer service and fund raising. Its mission is to ensure stewardship for the Washington Park Arboretum, a Pacific Northwest treasure, and to provide horticultural leadership for the region. This stewardship requires effective leadership, stable funding, and broad public support.

Washington Park Arboretum (WPA) is administered cooperatively between the University of Washington, its Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH), and the City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation. The programs and plant collections are a responsibility of CUH.

WPA is a living plant museum emphasizing trees and shrubs hardy in the maritime Pacific Northwest. Plant collections are selected and arranged to display their beauty and function in urban landscapes, to demonstrate their natural ecology and diversity, and to conserve important species and cultivated varieties for the future. The Arboretum serves the public, students at all levels, naturalists, gardeners, and nursery and landscape professionals with its collections, educational programs, interpretation, and recreational opportunities.



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In the Washington Park Arboretum

BY JOHN A. WOTT, DIRECTOR

Surviving Winter

WPA had a busy winter and looks forward to a busier spring.

The winter of 1996–1997 started with a record early snow fall on November 19 and continued with heavier snows beginning December 26. Homeowners may find their experiences similar to those of the Arboretum.

November's Snow

Because many plants had not completely hardened off yet, and many still held leaves, breakage was substantial during the first winter storm. The amount of branches and debris that came down in 200 acres was just incredible; it was estimated that WPA staff would spend almost two months to clean up after the first storm alone.

As a group, sweet gums were particularly hard hit, as were several stripe-bark maples, elms, and birches. Many of the *Magnolia grandiflora* trees were heavily damaged. The most tragic

The stone cottage (top) is a popular landmark at the southeast entrance to the Arboretum. Canopies of native trees, such as the big-leaf maple above, are being studied in the Arboretum. Photos by Joy Spurr

loss in the November storm was a forty-year-old specimen of *Nothofagus dombeyi*, a southern beech native to Chile and Argentina, which was near the Lookout. In Rhododendron Glen, an *Alnus japonica* (Japanese alder; native to Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and northeast China) of the same age, split.

One Month Later...

According to WPA Horticulturist Christina Pfeiffer, the second snow storm added more broken limbs and downed trees. The heavy rains contributed to the fall of some of the trees and slowed access to the clean-up of many areas. As a group, the Douglas-firs, pines, junipers, cupressus, and evergreen oaks suffered the most damage. Countless broken branches in large trees will take months to prune, all needing to be accessed by climbing. There appeared to be less debris on the ground than from the first storm, however.

Horticulturist Pfeiffer reported that among the specimens lost were: *Pinus radiata* in the Pinetum, *Juniperus squamata* var. *fargesii* south of the lath house, *Cupressus bakeri* (the modoc cypress) near the stone cottage, *Quercus suber* (cork oak) in the Mediterranean area, and *Alniphyllum fortunei* in the Woodland Garden.

The excessive water taxed weak links in the drainage system as flooding and washouts in drain lines appeared. A large cavern formed in the upper trail at Rhododendron Glen where a drain tile was broken (it was later repaired). Heavy debris clogged the drain under the Wilcox Bridge (one of the old bridges crossing Lake Washington Boulevard East), closing the boulevard. The water had never been so deep in the *Sorbus* Collection, and water ran through the University of Washington Greenhouse from the east edge. It took some time to access damage due to the excessive wet soil conditions.

WPA architectural features were not spared of snow damage. The east arbor of the Graham Visitors Center, well-known for seasonal vines of *Clematis* and *Akebia*, buckled from snow load. In the plant production area at the Center for Urban Horticulture, directly north of WPA across Union Bay, the snow leveled both poly houses, and several plants were destroyed. The structures will need to be rebuilt.

The forces of nature annually dictate WPA's winter work activities, sometimes causing permanent delay. But it was encouraging that there were few major tree failures due to the ongoing large-tree management program. Also reassuring was that the recently cleaned and restored ponds operated smoothly under the heavy water flow.

One of the consequences of storms of this magnitude is that they interrupt and often eliminate tasks from WPA's regular work routine for weed control, winter pruning, and planting. In fact, it became a delicate balancing act between the storm clean-up and continuing essential scheduled work.

In the Tree Canopy

The native and naturalized tree canopy is being surveyed and evaluated throughout WPA. Horticulturist Christina Pfeiffer is spearheading the project to study the canopy in relationship to the health and display of the collections. Funded by a conservation grant from the Institute of Museum Services, the study will also assess invasive species that threaten both naturalized and collection plantings.

Randall Hitchen, graduate student at the University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture, is working closely with Pfeiffer and Field Arborist Lou Stubecki on the project as part of his master's thesis. He will examine color stereo aerial photographs and field surveys, from which he will produce computerized maps that will become part of the plant record database.

By reviewing photos taken over the last fifteen years, as well as referencing a 1935 vegetation survey of the Arboretum from the Olmsted Archives, WPA will learn about natural and induced changes to the arboretum's vegetation over time.

The Tree Canopy Survey is important to the conservation of the plant collections and to the management of large trees. It will also provide an assessment of the native tapestry, which will be used in the development of the master plan. Importantly,

it will instruct how WPA manages native trees as part of the plant collections display.

Plants from All Over

The Arboretum's primary source of seed from mainland China comes from the Shanghai Botanic Garden, People's Republic of China, according to Barbara Selemon, propagator. It is one of the Arboretum's most reliable sources for seed acquired from other members of the seed exchange program, known worldwide as Index Seminum. This program enables horticultural organizations throughout the world to exchange supplies of good seed in reasonable quantities—usually 25 seeds/packet.

In the past two years, several interesting plants grown from Shanghai Botanic Garden's seed have been added to WPA collections, according to Tracy Omar, assistant curator and recorder.

New in the Arboretum

When you visit WPA to see new plants, get a map and help locating them at the reception desk, Graham Visitors Center. Below, accession numbers are in parentheses and map coordinates are listed throughout. They will help you pinpoint locations of new specimens.

Podocarpus andinus (62-89) is a Southern Hemisphere gymnosperm. Two have been planted recently in the Rock Garden: one in 1S-5E and one in 1S-6E. Over the years, WPA's original plants of this species slowly succumbed to the coldest winters. The last was removed in 1992. This new accession was collected from Chile at a high elevation by Jan Pirzio-Biroli. Hopefully, it will prove hardier than its predecessor.

Magnolia amoena (32-95) is a small deciduous tree native to China. One has recently been planted in 22-1E, west of the Magnolia Collection—the first time this species has been in the collection. The plant is from a commercial nursery in Louisiana.

Platycarya stobilacea (52-93) is a walnut relative from China. One has been planted in 48-3E, near Duck Bay. It was grown from seed from the Shanghai Botanic Garden. WPA's original plant of this species is in a very wet spot along Azalea Way and is now in decline.

Pterostyrax psilophylla (47-93) is newly planted in a rhododendron bed in grid 11-4E, near the Magnolia Collection. The other plants are in grids 8-5E and 12-8E, east of Arboretum Drive East near the Camellia Collection. This deciduous tree is related to *Styrax* and is an endangered species in its native China. The new plant is from seed from Shanghai Botanic Garden. WPA also has a plant in the collection that was not wild-collected. The new specimen represents a source of important new germ plasm.

Volunteers Jump into WPA's Internet

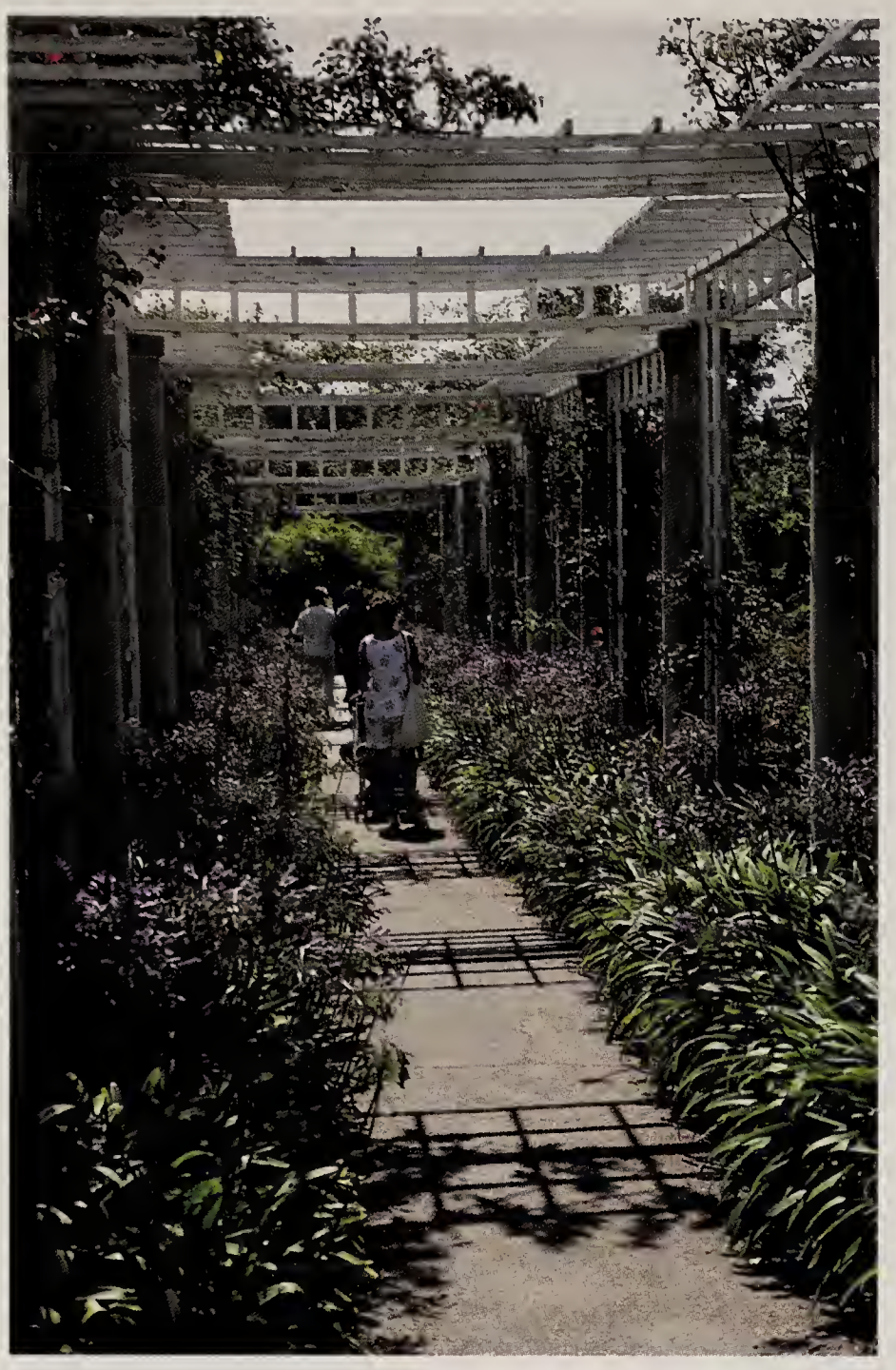
Kirsten Bilodeau, WPA's halftime education coordinator, discovered something novel about volunteers in the 1996 Autumn Sapling's Program: Over fifty percent were recruited through e-mail. During October nearly 1500 students from 16 schools attended the programs.

Guiding New Guides

Take a tour of the Arboretum with one of the 22 new volunteer guides recruited by Dana Kirley, education coordinator. Out to learn every last detail about the Arboretum, these diehard naturalists met every Tuesday morning during fall and spring training, braving all elements for the sake of flora.

Each new guide now can tell you or your children about WPA's seasonal highlights and provide in-depth information about the collections, plant biology, and ethnobotany.

John A. Wott, Ph.D., is the director of Washington Park Arboretum.



Designing the Garden Path Experience

Ways to entice the eye and encourage the foot

PHOTOS & TEXT BY IAIN ROBERTSON

When designing paths, it is essential to take into account factors that affect how people perceive and *chart their course* through space. Think of path design as working with sequential experiences. Establish these before deciding how they interact with space, objects, and plants. Before starting, designers should consider the bounds and catalog the many details—the things that when artfully organized make the journey its own reward.

Simple and obvious approaches to designing a garden path are best. The *straight and narrow* way is a sign of clear planning for successful paths, and there is no need to be *hedged* by complexities.

The above paragraphs contain spatial metaphors and expressions. These point out the extent to which we think and talk spatially. Recognizing this should encourage you to have confidence in your own words and experiences. If we attend to the ways in which we express ourselves, they will suggest appropriate design actions.

Let these photos help you reach the goal of path-making more directly. Put another

way, approach them as straightforwardly as the beautifully framed view along the trellised walk (**opposite page, upper left**)—simple, direct, unambiguous, yet delightful.

As you follow this photo essay think about how to perceive the objects and your subconscious responses to the space and plants. Then use our collective linguistic riches to help connect these. In the current jargon of the street, "Go figure." And what better place to reflect on going and figuring than the enticement implicit in the half-revealed open space on the path leading into the Generaliffe (**opposite page, upper right**)?

Straight paths are direct, unequivocal, unambiguous. The Generaliffe at the Alhambra, in southern Spain, revels in the qualities of straight line paths and provides a marvelous termination for the axis. Jets of water along the way provide a rhythm or cadence to the walk so that it is never dull. A curve would ruin the design by attacking its conceptual foundation, and (as an example of how words help reveal design) would "drive us round the bend."

By contrast, look at the next pair of photos (**lower left and right, opposite page**). Taken on the path that leads up to the Alhambra, they illustrate the qualities of curving paths. Notice first the different expectations implicit in curves that bend and thus conceal their goal from our straight line vision (lower left, opposite page). An important attribute of curving paths is their ability to surprise, because the end need not be visible from the start. As a result, all sorts of design possibilities exist on curving paths. The goal may be gradually revealed, as this gently curving path does, or it may be precipitated suddenly by a sharp bend. Having set up the tension of surprise associated with curving paths the goal should delight rather than disappoint. Three yellow and green recycle containers and the garbage can at the back door are not an appropriate reward to terminate a curving garden path.

Notice how the space is only partially revealed—but notice, too, that it is revealed partly and that it is lighted; by definition, outdoor space is always lighter than its surrounding masses, buildings, or plants, from which we enter or view it. Our eye is drawn to light, like a moth to a candle, so this view doubly entices, first with the half-revealed space and second with the light. Together these spark our curiosity and draw our feet down the garden path.

Beginnings: They entice, promise, suggest. Although entirely different in their methods, these two entrances evoke our interest: one, by its intriguing suggestiveness and the other by offering an enticing view.

So, let us start at the beginning once more. Every path must have a beginning and—one expects and trusts—possess an end. Paths that lack satisfactory ends fail to make physical reality conform to mental expectations and, not surprisingly, users are disappointed. This rule may be stated simply: Paths must have ends, or purposes. A path without an end is like a sentence without a....

By contrast, purposeless garden paths with aimless meanderings reveal the futility of traveling along them. We neither know where we are on them nor why they are taking us where they go. Where paths and purposes do not coincide, paths become meaningless.

Beginnings and ends are important. They should be celebrated spatially. Therefore, establishing the beginning and end of a garden path is the first step. Consider how you want your path users to think and feel about that critical first step. Then decide what you might do to induce this desired response. That is not too difficult. After all, most of us know what we like, and we share those likes, to a large degree, with those for whom we design. Again look at the photo examples on these pages.

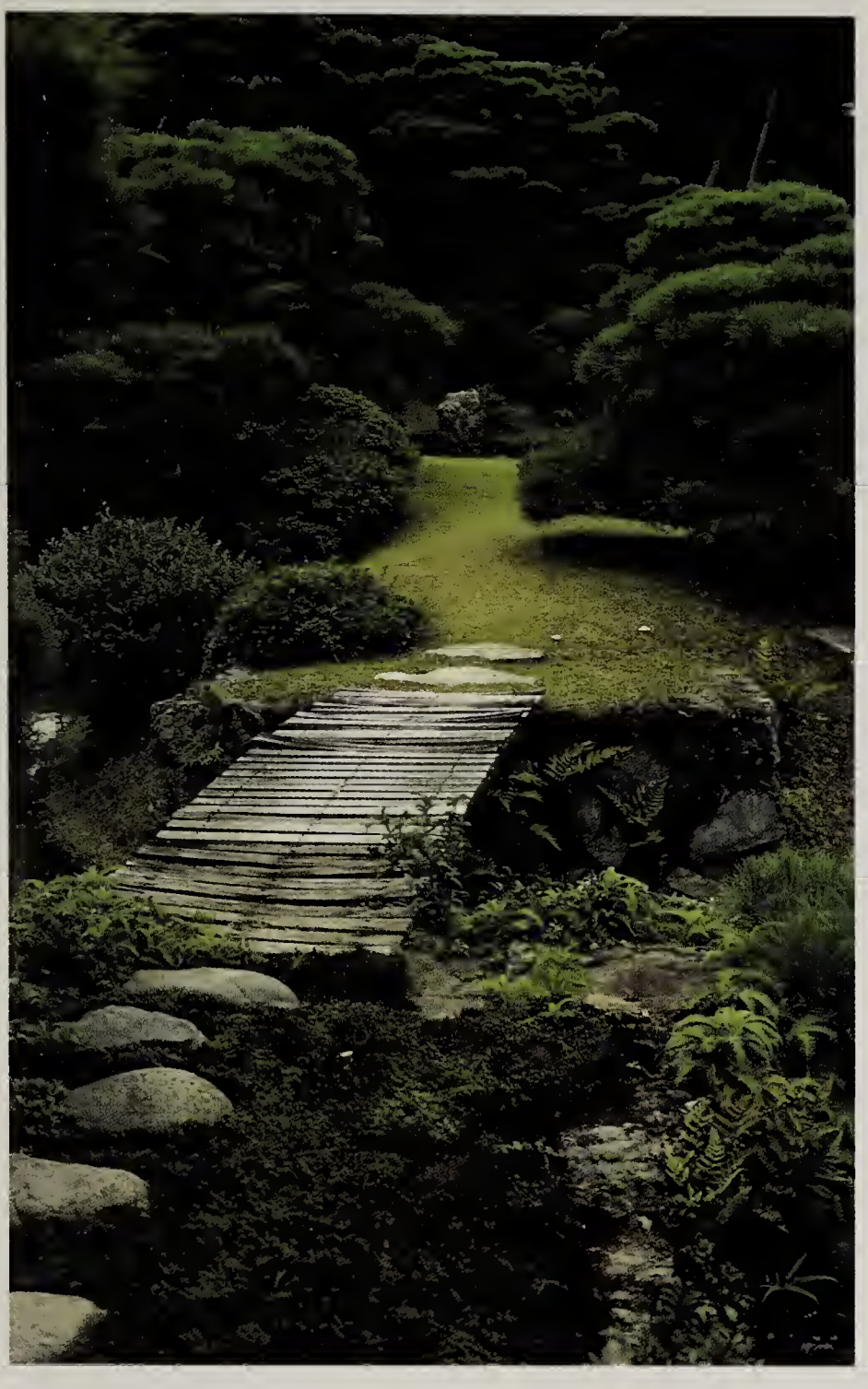
Beginnings are often prescribed by factors beyond the garden designer's control, such as the location of a door or entrance from a street. By contrast, we have much greater design latitude in the choice of end points. Think of starting points as *entrances*, which reminds us to think of both pronunciations of the word: Every *en*trance should en*trance*. Ponder what promises await within and what trances we wish to induce. Consider the many qualities and possibilities of entrances that entrance.

Goals, or ends, clearly differ from beginnings. Think of them as rewards when designing garden paths. Physical comfort, mental ease, and security—all are appropriate responses to try to evoke in users when they reach the end of the path. *(continued, next page)*

The charming summer house (**lower left**) seems to promise all that, and more, as a reward. Who is not ready to leap into the picture and climb the steps to this enticing goal?

Knowing how we want to begin and end a path, we are already halfway to a design. Beginnings and endings strongly suggest, if not demand, a specific emotional and physical connection to make the path a complete whole. The entire experience must hang together as a unity. Certainly the length can vary, but as a design rule, the shorter the path the more completely its beginning and end dictate design possibilities.

Next determine how many experiences can be accommodated along the length of a path—how much stimulation is too much or too little. A basic design rule in thinking about this question is to let the plants do their share of the work. Garden designers should not feel that they have to do everything. Trust plants to add variety, stimulation, seasonal change, spatial definition, and more. The view along a simple, straight path **(top)**



is in no way rigid or dull, because the plants provide interest to the journey.

Longer paths generally occur in larger gardens and possess correspondingly more possibilities (Bloedel Reserve, Bainbridge Island, WA, **below**). Regardless of length, avoid cramming too many different and contrasting things along a path. To paraphrase British garden designer Gertrude Jekyll, restraint is an inestimable virtue in garden design. If you doubt the wisdom of this statement, think of Seattle's Aurora Avenue—a seemingly endless urban sprawl of stores and services.

Perhaps a better way to persuade you of the truth of this observation is to appeal to the plants and spaces themselves. Again, trust the plants to do their share of the work. Several photos illustrate different but successful paths that become progressively more simple.

The Japanese garden (**upper left**) is spatially rich and varied. Space, plants, and path surfaces vary, their variety united by what appears to be a common purpose. As a result, the path never loses its way. Indeed, a path that has lost its way will inevitably lose its purpose and vice versa.

Here, the large pine tree pushes out into the path but does not obstruct or confuse its direction. You can see past the tree, which seems to offer the chance to brush by its stiff needles rather than feeling they are a barrier or visual deterrent to movement. The variety along the path is carefully considered, and features are artfully located both spatially and temporally. From this picture emerges a clear design rule: Make all elements along a path—space, plant masses, and details—work toward a common goal.

The straight path at Edinburgh Botanical Garden (**upper right**) is much simpler than the one in the

Japanese garden. It is a uniform herbaceous border, backed by a tall hedge and terminated by a tantalizing glimpse of a conservatory—an exciting goal. What could be simpler in plain view? But the design is never dull as the plants provide interest during the summer months and the bold spatial form is compelling at other seasons. In other words, users unwittingly focus on and enjoy variety in the border at one season and recognize Spartan qualities of the space itself at other times.

The contracted spatial scale of the garden in Seattle's Wallingford district (**page 9, middle right**) contrasts dramatically with that of Edinburgh Botanical Garden; the spatial form is also radically different. The goal of the path is clearly the entrance rather than the plants themselves. Visitors brush past plants, first on one side and then the other, as they progress along this path, which appears to narrow as it "closes in" on its destination.

Through very simple space manipulations, this path simultaneously provides tension and reassurance to the traveler. Again, restraint in the use of plants benefits the design. The experience could, in fact, be diminished by making each plant dramatically different. However, since we are constrained to brush past the plants due to the confined space, it would help to provide plants with more pleasing tactile qualities than juniper.

On this page, a garden path is reduced to its bare essentials (**above**). No petunias, no hanging baskets, no *Cardiocrinum giganteum*—only a curving rill of water that beckons you to follow and seems to promise delight along the way and a marvelous goal. The virtue of simplicity and clarity expresses the path's purpose. Faithfulness to the innate qualities of materials—here flowing water—reinforces the purpose. This simple water feature and path clearly charms and entrances.

The design lessons we may derive from these different paths are unequivocal. Restraint and a clarity of design purpose are essential to create designs that evoke positive responses from users. Stated another way: Paths that invite users to participate with them in the exploration of a garden are more successful than those that thwart our natural desires and attempt to condemn us to follow them where *they* want to take us.

This example reveals another essential design lesson: Think sequentially. Paths are to be traveled along one portion at a time—a very different experience from looking down at a plan and being aware of everything simultaneously. Garden path experiences should be organized temporally as well as spatially: breakfast, lunch, dinner; or soup, entree, dessert, coffee—and brandy and cigars, if one so wishes—but each in its place at the appropriate time. When you proceed one step at a time, the design is revealed one piece at a time and the impact is enriched.

Path alignment is of vital significance to the experience of gardens and the expectations they create in us. The great division is between paths that reveal their goals throughout their lengths—straight ones—and those that do not—curvilinear or bending paths that conceal their end. Either may be used to create a great design as long as one understands the distinction.

There are many things to keep in mind when designing garden paths, but there is one essential point: To keep one's feet, one must keep one's head.

Iain Robertson is chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Washington, Seattle.

Greens to Market

Mental health clients learn to grow and market gourmet greens for community enterprises

BY DAVID JOHNSON

People with severe disabilities who live in poverty can develop work skills, doing real and meaningful work of many sorts. Some of these individuals with serious and persistent mental illnesses have become more independent through horticultural activities.

Transitional Resources, a nonprofit community mental health center in West Seattle, has fostered this collaboration between public and private entities to help those with mental illness learn horticultural skills: United Way of King County, the American Horticulture Therapy Association, and several foundations sponsor this program. With each doing a small part, together the capacity of the disabled is built, moving them toward independence. Since 1989, the University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture and Washington Park Arboretum have supported community mental health programs such as this one through creating volunteer opportunities.

In 1996, the Mental Health Division of Washington State's Department of Social and Health Services contracted with a horticultural therapist, Cheri Singer, and garden designer, Anne Jacobs, who teach staff and clients how to grow and distribute a line of high quality greens that upscale restaurants and caterers appreciate.

Singer and Jacobs own Samorina Greens, a private company that grows and markets gourmet greens while raising "social capital" — using the talents of the various disabled populations. The clients learn to plan for crop rotations, plant, harvest, and get the greens to market.

As a result of program development with Samorina Greens, Transitional Resources has launched Growing Solutions, a permanent horticultural industry that operates year-round. Some of the workers will be hired by Samorina and other horticultural businesses; others will eventually train in the horticultural programs at the community colleges. Transitional Resources plans to launch a small mobile work crew to do seasonal jobs and short-term projects in the horticultural industry.

David Johnson is the director of Transitional Resources.

Bailey-Boushay's Garden —An Enduring Legacy

PHOTOS & TEXT BY MIKE HOGAN

Several blocks from the East Madison entrance to the Washington Park Arboretum is Bailey-Boushay House, an AIDS Hospice and day health facility. It not only serves the needs of the patients but the psychological needs of their spouses and relatives, as well. In addition to the patients, Bailey-Boushay is the home of an ever-expanding perennial border created by volunteers. Since opening in the summer of 1991, over fourteen hundred people have called Bailey-Boushay their last home and garden.

I first became involved with Bailey-Boushay as a neighborhood supporter in the late 1980s, when some neighbors opposed it as a nonconforming use of commercial property. A lawsuit delayed the project for a year, but I began caring for the garden. During

Sales of bird houses (top) support the garden, in part. Perennials, such as the foxglove above, fill all possible spaces around Bailey-Boushay House.

that time I founded Bailey-Boushay House's garden six months before the first residents arrived.

I started this project, without a budget, by dividing plants from my own garden and obtaining plants or small donations from my friends and neighbors. By spring, my neighbor Leon Vaughn joined the project. Until he retired at age eighty, Leon supplied plant material solicited daily from the garden industry, Seattle Department of Parks, surplus plants from The Arboretum Foundation plant sale donations department, and friends. The Northwest Flower & Garden Show displayers also have been generous.

In addition to Seattle's horticultural community, others have helped create Bailey-Boushay's garden. Through my twelve years as a Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for King County, I've worked with survivor families of violent crimes, such as murder and vehicular homicide. These families understand the tragic nature of untimely death and have been very generous in supporting our garden project, as has the entire criminal justice system at King County Courthouse.

Though Leon and I always accepted everything that was offered, sometimes I just didn't know what to do with it all. Trial and error has been the guide, and we have some healthy plants that looked like they would not survive and have lost other, healthy-looking specimens, inexplicably. This is the nature of our garden.

We started with an institutional bark and shrub perimeter and planted well over one hundred rose bushes and over thirty alpine trees, as well as clematis, trumpeter vines, honeysuckle, etc. *The Seattle Times* characterized the results as a "resplendent garden" when Leon and I received the Intiman Theater's "Angels in Seattle" award. But the real payoff has been in the process of creating something so beautiful that creates pleasure for so many. I've found no other community service work with such visible and enduring quality for the donor as well as the recipients.

It seems unnatural for parents to be caring for their dying children, yet this is a daily vigil at Bailey-Boushay for parents, partners, and friends. I've always tried to create a beautiful garden that will be a mother's first view when she arrives and last view when she leaves. It's what I would want. Many come from out of state, and some have to leave before the end of that long vigil. It feels good to hear a mother express how a flower made her day.

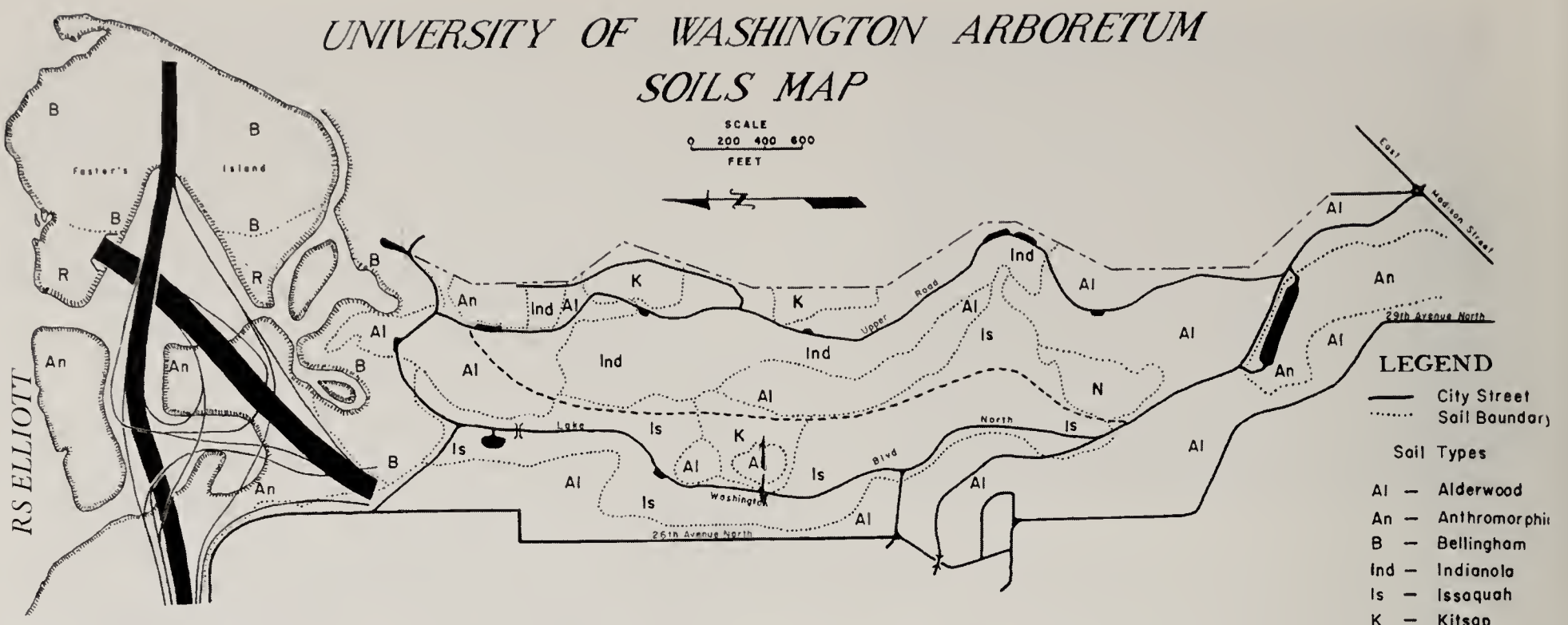
In fall of 1996, I purchased a wonderful old greenhouse from St. Anne's Catholic Church on Queen Anne Hill at a greatly reduced price. Moving it to my yard will be a major step torward our goal of becoming self-sufficient. The greenhouse was the private property of St. Anne's pastor, Father Kramus, who grew orchids and lilies for the couples he married. His greenhouse, which sat empty for twenty-five years, will now grow plants for Bailey-Boushay.

Looking ahead, with the recent retirement of volunteer Leon Vaughn, we hope to evolve into a garden cooperative group.

We hope to become the best perennial garden anyone has ever seen, because for many, our garden is their last view.

Mike Hogan can be reached at (206) 382-3867.

Mike Hogan, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for King County, gardens with his Shetland sheepdog, Devon.



Data Collection
Dalles Hughes
Ralph Monteen
Furman Irby
John McColl

The Arboretum Underground

BY REBECCA TAYLOR

Driving through the Washington Park Arboretum is an out of city experience. Massive red cedars and big-leaf maples advance from the interior of the park. Stands of alder and birch track a creek that runs along the valley bottom. Abandoning the boulevard for a footpath leads you through an extensive collection of plants from temperate climates worldwide. Water-loving larch and bald cypress are scattered through the lowlands and a prestigious collection of hollies grows near some of the native forest matrix. For many people the Arboretum is an urban wildland—an open space to roam in and interact with nature. A place to escape the city. "I come for the trees," said one visitor.

People might visit the Arboretum for peace of mind or to celebrate trees, but they usually ignore what goes on beneath their feet.

Soil textbooks often have illustrations that cut through a section of earth, revealing a secret underground world. From tree roots stretching out just under the ground's surface, to veins of ground water feeding streams, the activity found there is amazing. When the page is turned we are left with an impression that a lot is going on underground. But it is not clear how to connect what we see above ground with what happens below it.

Of course, any experienced gardener knows that there is a connection between good soil and healthy plants. But as they walk through the landscape, only a few people see the soil in terms of the presence and absence of water, or signs of glaciers 10,000 years gone. The expression of water that plants convey in the green of their leaves or twisted shapes of their trunks not only indicates that water exists, but describes the types of soil and land forms that created that condition.

The Arboretum is not only a special garden in our city because of its collections but also because of its glacial history. Thousands of years ago, sliding ice flows carved the steep slopes of Seattle, leaving gravity and water to refine them. The variety of soils in the Pacific Northwest were caused by glaciers juxtaposing the rock and earth of neighboring regions. The diverse topography and soil types in the Arboretum are a geologic legacy that fosters a variety of plant and water forms.

The plants are nourished by water in dramatic ways. Rain falls off tree tops and hillsides, streams roll and turn, wetlands soak through the earth, and seeps come up to meet the air. Part of the larger Union Bay watershed, the Arboretum has always been defined by the movement of water.

During the 1930s, the water's natural pace was accelerated as people began draining the site to build the Arboretum. Depression era WPA (Works Progress Administration) crews who built the Arboretum's beautiful bridges and cottage out of stone, also laid an ambitious drainage system. The drainage maps they drafted show a spine of clay tiles along

Azalea Way that is as distinct as any landmark above ground. There are drainage lines distributed, in clusters, throughout the site. Nests of lines thin and lead away like tracks, showing the water's engineered path to a lowland creek draining to Lake Washington.

The intricate patterns of drainage in Rhododendron Glen are like needlework. The crowded tiles were laid to mitigate a naturally wet hillside filled with combination soils. Some of the drainage tiles have decayed. Others have become misaligned as the hillside moves, carried by ground water seeping through porous corridors.

Stone steps that connect to the Lookout above Rhododendron Glen were built when the drainage system was laid. They were built because of their creator's confidence in the drainage system and its ability to control natural processes. Today the steps are shifting with a hillside that is moving northward after a sixty year delay.

The combination soils that conduct water through the slopes of Rhododendron Glen are found all over the Arboretum. The eight different soil types scattered thoughout the site are shown on the map (left), which was published with an article called, "Soils of the Arboretum," in a 1966 *Arboretum Bulletin*. The author, University of Washington Professor Stanley Gessel, explained: "For any land area, a knowledge of soil types, soil properties, and distribution of soils is essential to proper management."

Chris Pfeiffer, Arboretum horticulturist, strongly agrees. "When I've looked at all the problems in the landscape, the long-term answer comes back to what we do in the soil." One thing Pfeiffer does in the soil is improve it. The challenges of managing a 200-acre site with 4,600 different plant species and at least eight soil types are substantial. Yet, most problems come down to making the soil function at its highest capacity.

For example, when a collection of sumacs near Arboretum Drive East was failing, Chris examined the soil conditions. The earth was dried and split like cracked cement, and weeds were moving in. Planting in rich soil is an easy way to ensure plant growth. However, improving the poor soil of an established planting is more difficult, to avoid hurting the plant's root system.

The staff waited until the soil was ready to work—not too wet or dry. Then, using a spade fork, they raked compost into the top five inches of earth and mulched over that. After five years of this regime, the soil profile has been enriched and the sumacs are thriving.

Other components of the arboretum underground are soilborne diseases. In the native forest of Loderi Valley, the dense canopy is often interrupted by a beam of light that marks a fallen tree.

The dead tree's stump will usually show signs of a fungus growing through its rings. Nature always recycles; if left alone, microorganisms will break down a tree completely. *Armillaria mellea* is one decomposer that occurs naturally in the soil profile throughout the Arboretum. However, the fungus can build up in the roots of dead or dying trees and become aggressive, invading the roots of nearby trees and shrubs. Plants that are weak or stressed are most vulernable. Using compost to maintain soil tilth and health is crucial in these circumstances.

"Good growth depends on good tilth," Pfeiffer has said. Two factors that allow plants to defend themselves against predators are good health and soil tilth that provides for adequate drainage and fosters strong plant growth. Throughout the arboretum's history, people have tried to alter the existing underground conditions in favor of plants or pedestrian access. However, people have also had a hand at creating these conditions. Citizens at the turn of the century used the park as a garbage dump. The finger of land that flanks Duck Bay to the west and the ballpark at the southern boundary of the arboretum are both composed of fill.

"Depending upon the mixture of fill and garbage, and the length of time since active filling, these soils can be very fertile and are adapted to a wide range of plants," Gessel wrote. Bottle collectors have been sighted night and day, knee-deep in the dump's fertile soils, digging for buried treasure.

They are a few of the growing number of visitors who have dropped their gaze to explore the world beneath the Arboretum.

Rebecca Taylor was a student in the University of Washington School of Landscape Architecture studio course, focusing on the Arboretum's master plan.

WHERE IN THE ARBORETUM?

Japanese Umbrella Pine

BY CHRISTINA PFEIFFER,
ARBORETUM HORTICULTURIST
PHOTOS BY JOY SPURR

The Arboretum has several nice specimens of Japanese umbrella pine (*Sciadopitys verticillata*), although none are older or larger than the one at Seattle's Curry Church, discussed in the next article.

The smallest umbrella pine in the arboretum is tucked behind the palms in the "texture" bed in front of the University of Washington greenhouse, near the Graham Visitors Center. An older, established group can be seen at the east side of the Legume area, almost to the Broadmoor fence (grid 17-6E). Another specimen can be seen at the southwest end of the parking lot at the Japanese Garden.

The Japanese umbrella pine is one of my favorite trees. It is beautiful in texture and color of leaf, bark, and cones, and unlike its giant redwood relatives, it is well suited to the scale of the urban garden. It is a slow grower in the maritime Northwest, reaching no more than a narrow forty feet in height over fifty years. This tree grows to one hundred feet in its native habitat, which must be quite a sight to behold.

The Japanese umbrella pine grows best on fertile, well-drained soil, with some summer irrigation, in sun to partial shade. The fifty-year-old trees at the arboretum have proven to be low maintenance for pests and pruning. And over the years, they have come through winter storms with little or no damage.

This fine tree merits more use in our gardens and is available in local nurseries. While it is a very slow-growing species, it is a lovely specimen at any size.

Umbrella pine in the arboretum

Seattle's Heritage Tree Preservation Program

Cass Turnbull has become one of the most outspoken tree experts in the United States since starting PlantAmnesty over ten years ago to promote better pruning and tree maintenance. Now with more than 900 members, Cass's forthright advice is sought in over 40 states and foreign countries. PlantAmnesty receives the proceeds of her book, *The Complete Guide to Landscape Design, Renovation, and Maintenance* (1991: F&W Writers Digest, Cincinnati, Ohio).

In 1995, PlantAmnesty started the Heritage Tree Preservation Program for Seattle.

Cass explained about the project during several conversations with *Bulletin* Editor Jan Silver around New Year's 1997.

In the Beginning...

PlantAmnesty's Heritage Tree Preservation Program is one year old, the brainchild of our Education Advocacy Committee. We wanted to help with Seattle's tree ordinance, which has been in the process of being revised for the last seven or eight years—we're upset that it never seems to get done. We were told in 1995 that it was again on hold because of the property rights movement. Since the mood of the people was not good, the committee decided that maybe we should create a heritage tree program, independent of the city.

People had been calling PlantAmnesty two or three times a year and telling me that a tree was about to be cut down and they didn't know what to do. Now there is something I can do about it.

There's no legal power with this program yet, but people have a beginning. It's very sad to see a tree that's been standing in your neighborhood since you were a little girl cut down by the new owner, who then moves on. Frequently owners have no understanding that their tree has value to anybody.

Sometimes owners are afraid their trees are about to fall or they're messy, and after a few years of raking leaves, people turn sour on their tree. There also seems to be an internal need for people to modify their habitat—clearing land like a pioneer: "This is my land, and I can do with it what I want."

Other Heritage Tree Programs

The first such program I heard about was England's tree preservation ordinance. In England, any group of citizens can nominate a tree; it doesn't have to be their own. They're quite strict: You can't cut them down, and fines and penalties are considerable.

In America, there have been some really poorly crafted ordinances that make people angry. For example, "Save any tree over six inches in diameter." There have been famous cases where people went to cut down their trees before the law went into effect.

In some new developments, people are forced to keep hazardous trees. One of our first criteria is to eliminate hazardous trees as potential nominees, which is where our

Cass Turnbull with Liz Ellis at the dedication of Curry Church's umbrella pine, which is Seattle's first heritage tree.

certified arborists come in very handy.

A lot of trees in Arthur Lee Jacobson's book, *Trees of Seattle*, have been topped or removed. It's as if people have an old piece of furniture in their garage they don't know is antique. For example, Seattle's biggest magnolia is in Ballard, and it has a tree swing on it and a large stubbed-off limb.

How Seattle's Program Works

Individuals or groups or organizations can nominate a tree or group of trees. First we send them a brochure, which they fill out with the particulars about the tree or trees. Then we have arborists in our Tree Guy committee review them and make recommendations. The Tree Guys are mostly professional arborists who have a good understanding of trees—whether they're safe and would qualify as good heritage trees. The tree owner must be willing to preserve the tree, however.

Currently we provide people with a plaque and formal recognition. The tree name goes in a heritage tree registry to notify posterity that this is a special tree.

Cooperation with Similar Programs

Jan Drago from the Seattle City Council is interested in tree preservation., but that was discovered due to a very serendipitous event. After we'd been working on this program for about three months, we heard that a group called Save Seattle's Trees wanted to put wording in the King County Comprehensive Plan about preserving the tree canopy. At the hearing, we showed up, and Jan Drago was very receptive to the Heritage Tree Preservation Program; she spoke at our first dedication.

The Legal Basis

I don't think there's a will within city government to enforce the laws we have. Currently, the City of Seattle's legal department is being blamed for not enforcing existing ordinances on illegal topping, removal, or planting on city parking strips.

Originally, we wanted to have owners put a deed restriction on their property to answer the private property issue. We haven't developed the legal aspect yet, mostly due to lack of funding.

With regards to our selection criteria, some people are paralyzed by setting rules and regulations. The important thing is to begin. When people start fighting over whose tree was chosen, we'll start tightening up the rules and regs.

My personal policy is "Don't wait," especially for the city—the tree ordinance being proof of that. If the city wants to eventually integrate this program, that would be fine with us, because, in the distant future, who is the owner going to call? The city. It would be nice for the city to monitor heritage trees unless PlantAmnesty comes into the big bucks.

Incentives for Citizens and Builders to Cooperate

Our program is strictly voluntary. Some people like their trees, and this way they can leave their community something nice and protect their tree from future cretins and view mongers. New property owners would know before they buy that the tree is protected.

Making a fuss over a tree makes people wonder, "Is my tree valuable; is my tree special?" Other cities have historic tree walks, so when people go by your tree, look at it admiringly and take notes—well, it makes you feel proud.

Supporting a Heritage Tree Program

We've only designated one tree so far—an umbrella pine. We provided a free pruning and added concrete wheel stops for trunk protection. We'll continue, but currently we have no funding. There'll have to be a way for paying for the program as it grows.

We installed a concrete monument with engraved aluminum plaque that has a description written by Arthur Lee Jacobson. To do all this takes about $300 in cash and $500 to $700 in donated time and labor. Nominees may take about a year to be approved.

We've thought about putting out a Seattle heritage tree book: The nomination would pay to nominate a tree, and then it would be put in the book with photos. The *Heritage Tree Book* could be sold as a funding source. But many of our best old trees are in the Central District where they can't afford to do this.

In Portland, the owners have to pay to have a tree pruned and fixed to make it worthy [before it becomes a heritage tree], but I don't want people to be excluded just because they're poor.

Seattle's First Heritage Tree

The first tree in PlantAmnesty's Heritage Tree Preservation Program was nominated by the Curry Temple Methodist–Episcopal Church (172 23rd Avenue between Spruce and Alder). The process started when a member of the congregation, Kate Wilson, tracked me down to ask about protecting an important specimen of umbrella pine. The tree had been continually threatened and then spared from removal over a period of years. Charles Eakers, president of the church's board of trustees, had said, "No, this is a special tree," and asked Kate to look into it.

At that time we didn't have a heritage tree program and I got that kind of clench in my stomach. I was struck by the urban analogy of the tree—that it was in a parking lot and taking up a "valuable" parking space. And believe me, the parking is tight there. It was the same old urban dilemma: green versus concrete.

The congregation discovered that the tree is about 90 years old and sits where a house used to be. It's been a chain of reprieves. To the average person, the tree doesn't seem like much, but it's huge for a Japanese umbrella pine.

By the time I was reached, the church was looking for some way to stop removal threats from recurring when new people come in and think, "Oh, I'd like this parking space." On October 20, 1996, after a year of work by PlantAmnesty and Curry church volunteers, the dedication took place.

PlantAmnesty's Heritage Tree Program

At the present time, only trees free of a high hazard rating, as assessed by an ISA Certified Arborist, are eligible for the Heritage Tree Registry.

Basically, no tree will be designated without the owner's approval, and it may take a year and donations of time and money to get a historic tree designated.

Seattle's Heritage Tree Preservation Program

To qualify for the heritage tree program, call (206) 783-9093.
Trees or groups of trees must meet one or more of these criteria:

O = *outstanding*: age, size, specimen, and health

A = *rare*: one or one of very few of a kind

B = *unique*: unusual in some form of growth or species

C = *historical*: a tree recognized by virtue of its age, its association with or contribution to a historical structure or district, or its association with a noted person or historical event

D = *significant group*: outstanding rows or groups of trees

E = *landmark significance*: trees that have become landmarks of the community

F = *specimen*: a tree of any given species that is particularly well suited in form, aspect, and health to represent its species

Coral Charm in the Border

BY AL ROGERS

One of the most romantic of flowers is the peony. Beloved by our grandparents, it has made a real resurgence in the plant world and is once again very popular. Cultivars have been improved, and by the complex intermingling of several species, new peonies have emerged.

One of the newer ones to finally reach the market is 'Coral Charm', developed by the late Sam Wissing, a Midwest hybridizer. This huge flower of eight to ten inches in diameter is a wonderful warm coral peach. The multiple layers of petals surround a bright center of yellow. Each bloom starts out bright coral and ages to peach, then becomes paler and paler until it reaches creamy yellow. With so many blooms on each plant, it is in constant change.

Of all of the corals, it is one of the easiest to propagate, grow, and multiply. 'Coral Charm' is also the largest coral in bloom size and height, and with the most reliable plant habits. One of the earlier peonies to bloom, it opens in Pacific Northwest gardens about the first week in May. This peony has a terminal bud and several side buds, and if all are left to open it will be in bloom over a month.

For bragging rights, nip off the side buds of some stems of 'Coral Charm' when the buds are the size of peas. This puts all of the strength into the terminal bud, which will be as large as twelve inches in diameter. Because they are slower to mature, it may be the third year before they show their full potential.

Peonies are, perhaps, the longest-lived perennial plant. I know of one in Oregon that came across the prairies in an ox cart in the 1850s and is still blooming. If kept fertilized and weeded, most clumps will last at least forty to sixty years.

Give peonies the best possible chance to flourish, and they will reward you with beautiful blooms year after year. Because of the difficulties in propagation, peonies cost more than shorter-lived perennials, but they're worth it.

Either full sun or partial shade suits them well. They need good air circulation to prevent mold, but if in a windy spot will need to be staked or the heavy blossoms will bend and even lay on the ground.

By the fourth or fifth year, 'Coral Charm' will have roots that may extend to six feet in diameter. Therefore, the planting hole should be at least two feet in diameter (the wider the better) and twelve to eighteen inches deep.

Discard the poorer soil from the bottom of the planting hole.

Plant with the shiny eyes on top, root mass down, so that the top eye is no more than two inches below the surface. If the root looks like a huge brown carrot, you can plant it on a slant with the eyes on top.

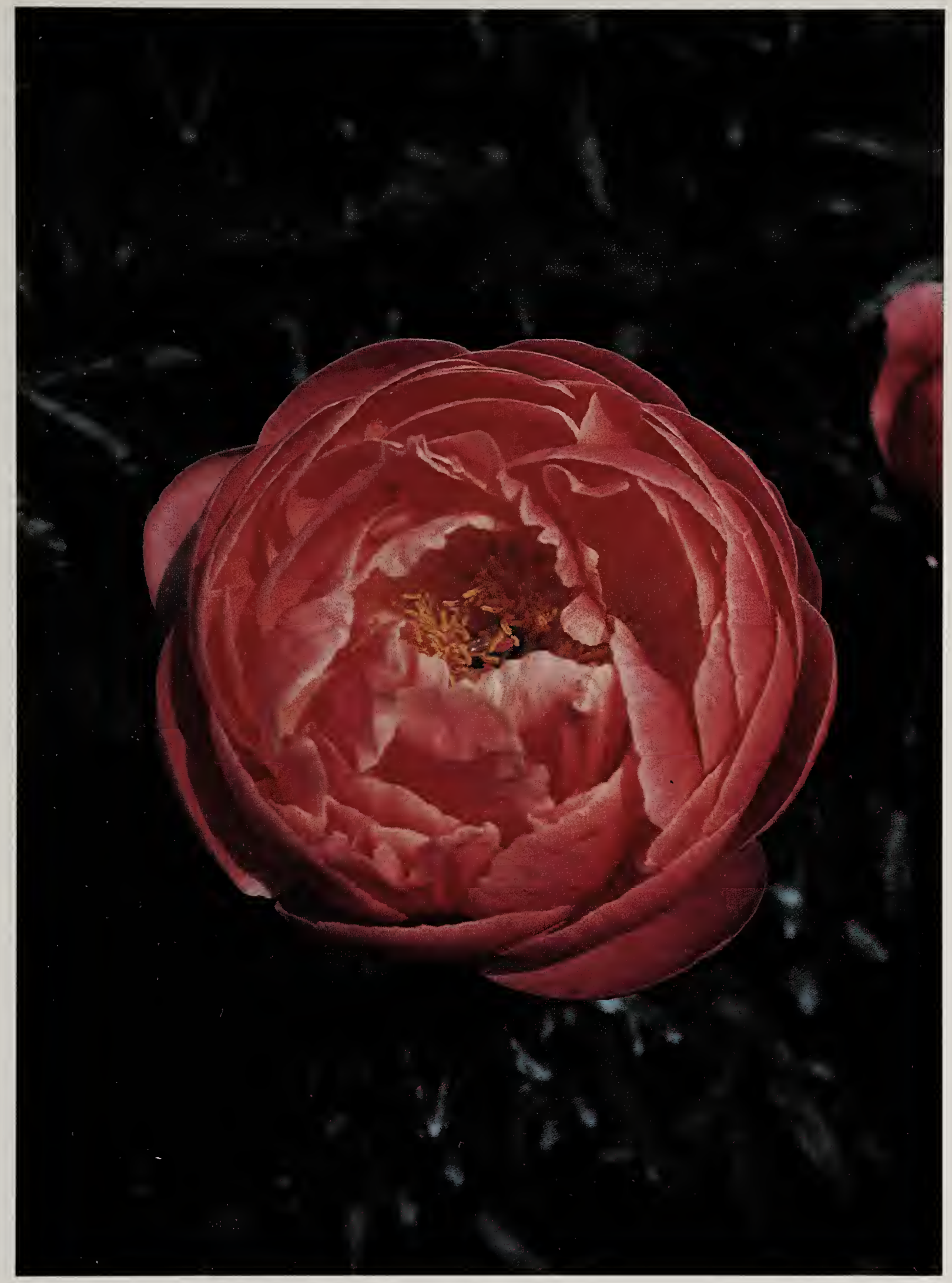
Mix the better topsoil with all of the compost, rotted manure, or peat moss that you can. Set a small amount of the mixture aside for top fill.

Return the soil mixture to the hole, and pour in a pail full of water to settle the soil.

We add a double hand full of slow acting bone meal (avoid the cooked kind with elements

WHERE IN THE ARBORETUM? PEONIES

During May and June, find peony cultivars blooming along Arboretum Drive East. Most of them are concentrated in one area west of Arboretum Drive East, adjacent to the Legume area (17-4 E and 16-5E on the WPA map). This representative sample of tree and herbaceous peonies flourishes among striped-bark maples and dwarf conifers.— Christina Pfeiffer, Horticulturist



Paeonia 'Coral Charm'. *Photo courtesy of Carla Laurent*

removed) at time of planting. Starting the second spring, fetilize with 5-10-5 (often called potato fertilizer). It is sometimes hard to remember that it is the roots we want to feed, not the top.

Al Rogers, author of the comprehensive book *Peonies*, from Timber Press, started Caprice Farm Nursery with his wife Dot in the 1970s.

Sources

A & D Peony, 6808 180th SE, Snohomish, WA 98296-8340; (360) 668-9690. Catalog is $2.00 (refundable toward purchase).

Caprice Farm Nursery, 15425 SW Pleasant Hill, Sherwood, OR 97140; (503) 625-7241.The nursery, 20 miles southwest of Portland, is open every day in May. Will send free catalog.

Letters

The Collector's Garden
(reviewed in 59:1)

About the Recent Book Review

In the last issue of the *Bulletin*, in the book review of *The Collector's Garden*, I am quoted as saying that we could not find local buyers for our plants in the beginning years of developing Heronswood. It has been nearly four years since that interview and I can't remember what exactly was said, but I am certain that I did not deliberately omit information that would elevate my own accomplishments without respect to the support of certain local nurseries. I feel it necessary to apologize to them for a gross misinterpretation of these statements, and to publicly acknowledge our concern. It is unfortunate, but of no fault to the reviewer, that this and only this parcel of information was extracted from the section of the book devoted to our nursery and garden.

In our early years, there were several nurseries that were very encouraging of our efforts. I will always be appreciative of that fact and willingly share that information with anyone who asks. I know those nurseries frequently took a risk with our product, which was oftentimes little-known. Today, as before, we frequently recommend these same nurseries to our visitors as exceptional sources of plants. The same is true when I speak to groups in this region.

For us, it is quite disturbing to have the illusion of these nurseries' efforts diminished by statements that were misinterpreted by the author of *The Collector's Garden*. These same nurseries are also ardent supporters of the Arboretum and the *Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin*. I respectfully ask that this letter be published in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

Dan Hinkley,
Heronswood Nursery,
Kingston, Washington

The Book's Author Replies

I received a page from the *Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin* with a review of my book, *The Collector's Garden*, written by Valerie Easton. Although Ms. Easton does not quote me directly, a line is presented as *if* taken from the book. The line reads, "...five years ago Dan Hinkley, co-owner of the successful Heronswood Nursery, Kingston, Washington, could not find a local retail nusery that would stock his unusual specimens..."

The sentence in the book is actually:

> "Five years ago, I would take what I thought were excellent plants to nurseries, and the owners would say that they couldn't sell anything the public doesn't recognize," Hinkley says.

My point in printing the quote was that Hinkley was ahead of his time. It seems that the general plant-buying public was not ready for some of the wonderful plants that are sold through the Heronswood catalog. I think Ms. Easton understood the thought. However, I would be sorry if her words "local" and "retail" made it appear as if I was commenting on area nurseries.

I am well aware of the horticultural community in your corner of the Pacific Northwest. Many American gardens would be poorer without the foresight, communication, propagation, and dissemination of plants by amateurs and professionals in your area. That is why I featured several of your gardening citizens in my book. I wrote *The Collector's Garden* with this same spirit of sharing, and I thank you for your recognition and praise.

Ken Druse,
Author of *The Collector's Garden*
Brooklyn, New York

For Further Information:

SHRUBS

BY VALERIE EASTON

Spirea japonica

Shrubs is an ugly, dumpy name for such wonderfully garden-worthy plants. I dream of creating an entire garden out of shrubs, with perhaps a few ground covers and bulbs tucked in here and there, thus simplifying my gardening life tremendously.

Penelope Hobhouse, known for her way with herbaceous plants, wrote:

> When I started to garden seriously, it was with a passion for evergreen shrubs...Together with trees shaping the skyline and the horizontal and vertical lines of hedges and grass, shrubs are the most important plant ingredients in any garden. (*On Gardening*. NY: Macmillan, 1994: p. 26)

Several recent books extol the virtues of shrubs, showing the gardener the great many possibilities for their use in building a garden of beauty in all four seasons.

Garden Club of America. *Shrubs.* Volume II, series on Plants That Merit Attention. Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1996. It would be hard to imagine a more useful book for the home gardener. The Garden Club of America has taken suggestions from horticulturists, botanists, gardeners, and landscape architects as to the most unusual, garden-worthy shrubs. Even roses are included, chosen not for their individual blooms, but for their contribution to the landscape. A selective listing is only as good as its criteria, and the criteria for selection here included pest and disease resistance, tolerance of a variety of landscape conditions, outstanding landscape attributes, and the degree to which these plants are still unusual and not commonly seen in home landscapes.

Since the volume is selective, enough information is given on each plant to really help in making intelligent decisions. Color photos show the form of the shrub in the landscape, with close-ups of fruit and flower. Entries give basic information, such as growth habit, eventual size, and detailed cultural information. There is a section called "Landscape habit," which could simply be titled, "Why give this plant space in your garden?" It provides information that you'd hope to get from a really great nurseryman, such as where to grow the plant in your garden, how to care for it, and where to see well-grown examples. Even for shrubs I have grown for years, such as staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina* 'Dissecta'), I learned something new. The sumac can be rejuvenated and its size kept somewhat in line, by cutting it to the ground in winter.

Completing the volume are detailed, thorough indices and directories. An index listing the shrubs by characteristics, such as dwarf, evergreen, fall color, conspicuous bloom, etc., is detailed and thorough. The same is true for nursery sources and a directory of arboreta, botanical gardens, and parks in which to see the recommended shrubs.

This volume, as with the previous one on trees and the upcoming volume on herbaceous plants, will help all of us to make better choices for our gardens.

Thomas, Graham Stuart. *Ornamental Shrubs, Climbers and Bamboos.* Portland, OR: Sagapress, Inc./Timber Press, Inc., 1992. While the Garden Club of America took pains to be selective, Thomas has been encyclopedic enough to create an authoritative reference work on shrubs. He excludes roses and rhododendrons but little else in this alphabetic listing of hundreds of shrubs.

Each short entry gives bloom time, color, height, a bit of history, and a description of several cultivars. Color and black-and-white photos are included for some of the shrubs. Introductory chapters on the value of shrubs in the garden and how to work with color, emphasizing foliage color as well as bloom, are excellent, as is a series of "practical points" on planting, soil, frost, pruning, propagation, and pests and diseases.

The title page bears this quote from essayist John Ruskin: "The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way." What raises this book above the ordinary is not just its complete and well-organized text, but Thomas's vast knowledge of the subject and his direct, personable way of telling it.

Gates, Galen, Chris Graham, and Ethan Johnson. *Shrubs and Vines.* The American Garden Guides (Chicago Botanic Garden, the Holden Arboretum, and the Royal Botanical Gardens). New York: Knopf Publishing, 1994. A small-scale, paperback guide to shrubs, this volume is notable for its outstanding photography. More than 200 full-color photos of shrubs, close up and in garden situations, illustrate a detailed "plant selector" section. Interspersed throughout the volume are "Viewpoint" columns, where each of nine experts gives their opinions on certain shrubs—their garden-worthiness, regional notes, and suggestions for use in the garden. Sections on garden design and techniques are general but very well illustrated, and a useful listing of sources is included.

Other Notable Shrub Books

Coats, Alice M. *Garden Shrubs and Their Histories.* 1st US ed. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992.

Courtright, Gordon. *Trees and Shrubs for Temperate Climates.* revised ed. Beaverton, OR: Timber Press, 1984.

DeWolf, Gordon P., Jr., editor. *Taylor's Guide to Shrubs.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Grant, John A., and Carol L. Grant. revised by Marvin E. Black, Brian O. Mulligan, Joseph A. Witt, and Jean G. Witt. *Trees and Shrubs for Pacific Northwest Gardens.* 2nd ed. Portland: Timber Press, 1990.

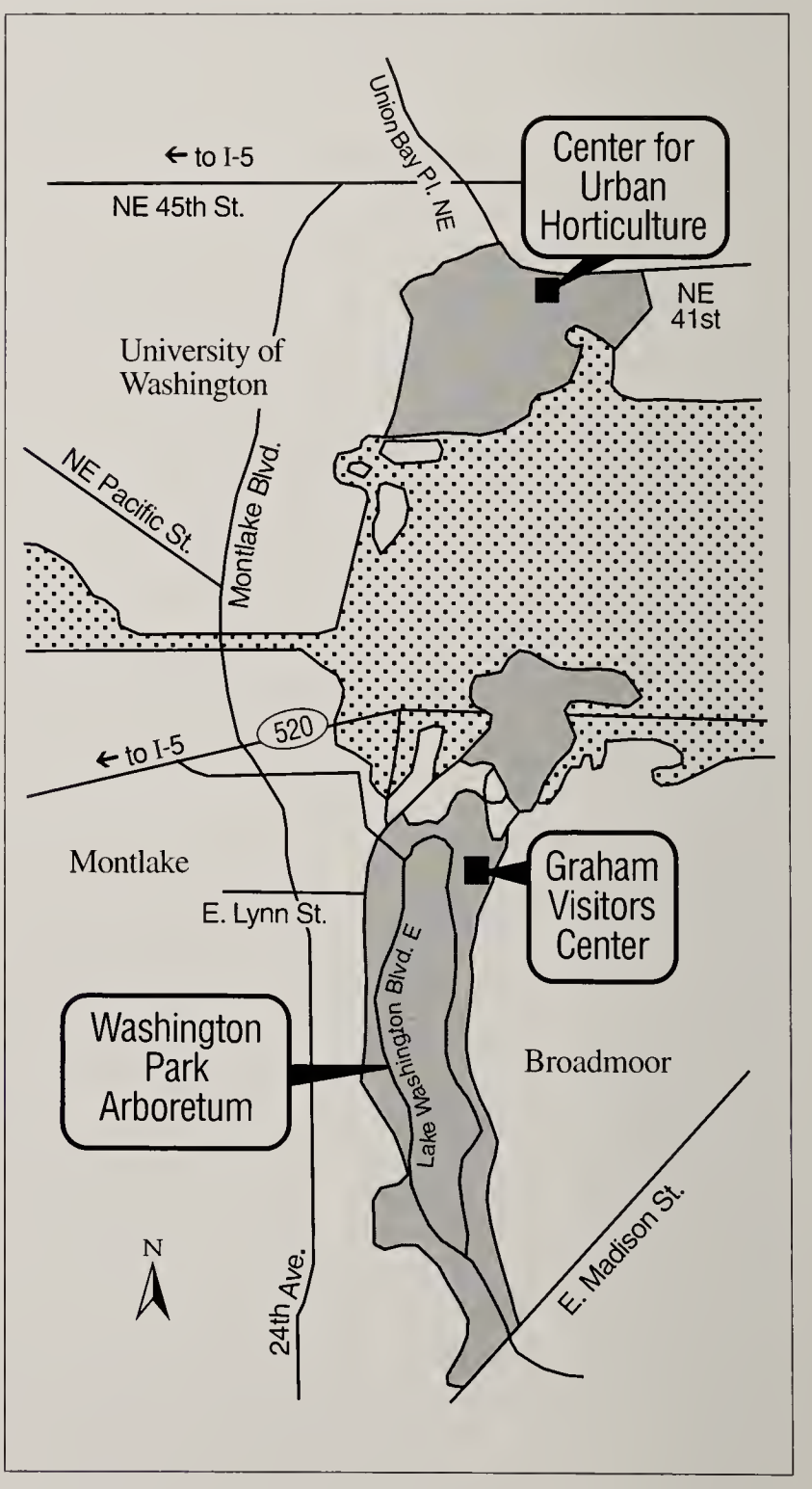
Hillier Colour Dictionary of Trees & Shrubs. 2nd ed. Newton Abbot, Devon: David & Charles, 1993.

Phillips, Roger, and Martyn Rix. *Shrubs.* New York: Random House, 1989.

Thomas, R. William. *Trees and Shrubs.* Hearst Garden Guides. 1st ed. New York: Hearst Books, 1992.

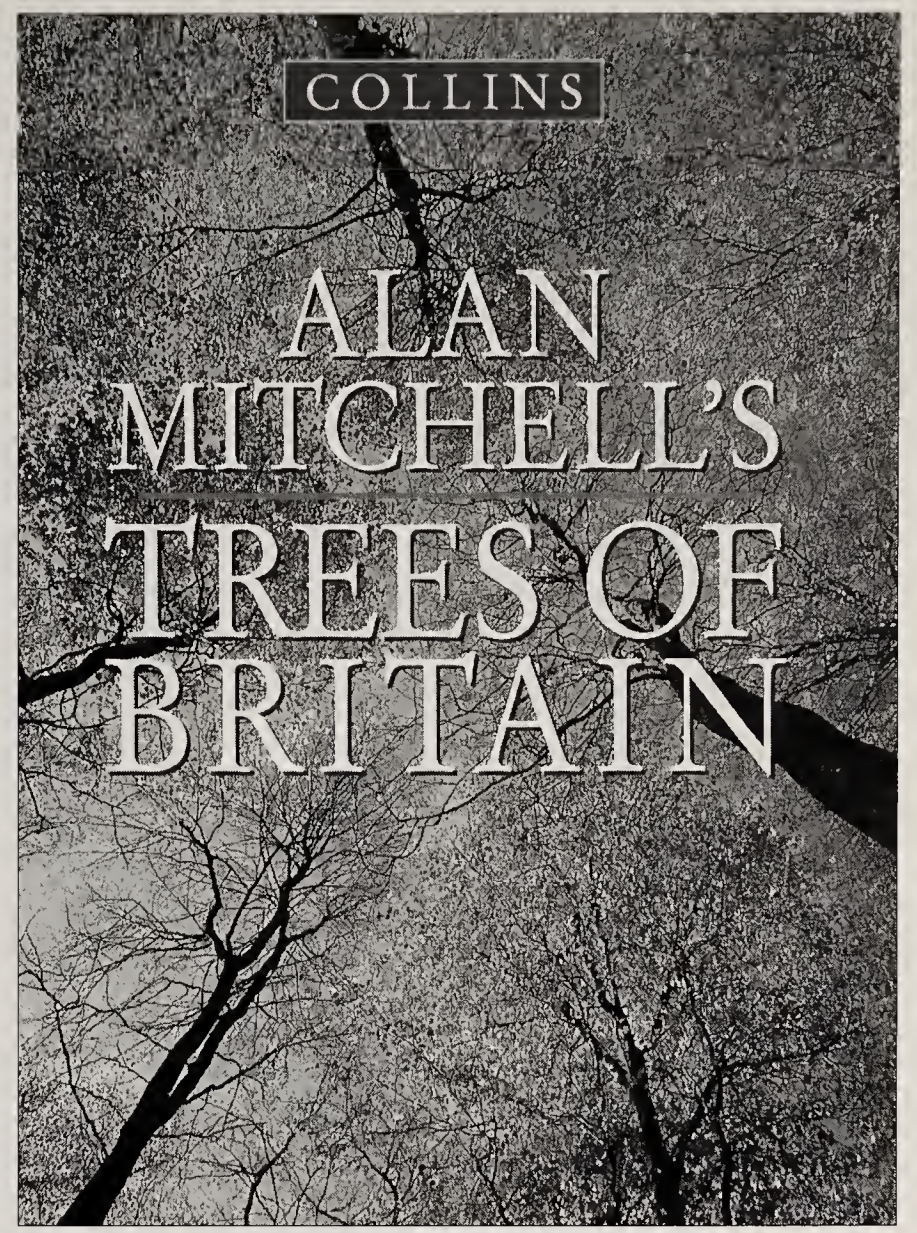
Zucker, Isabel, and Derek Fell. *Flowering Shrubs and Small Trees.* New York: Friedman/Fairfax Publishers, 1995.

Visit the Miller Horticultural Library, Center for Urban Horticulture.



Trees of Britain.

Alan Mitchell. London: HarperCollins, 1996.18 color, 121 black-and-white photos. £15.



Alan Mitchell (1922–1995) became famous in the world of tree study, especially in his native England, as the preeminent tree measurer. He wrote nine or ten books covering the identification of trees, as well as their history in cultivation, utility to people, and growth. His last title, published posthumously, cites the abundance, performance, strengths, and weaknesses of 163 kinds of trees cultivated in Great Britain.

Above all, the book provides valuable data on tree growth rates, life spans, and maximum sizes attained. It incidentally debunks myths, supplies identification tips, and serves as a soapbox whereby Mitchell can extol the virtues of certain trees while sharply attacking trees he loathed. The author's prose is always clear and sometimes potent. In places, it is refreshingly informal.

For example, Mitchell writes regarding black mulberry (*Morus nigra*).

> This species has no place in a book devoted to inspiring and noble specimen trees, as it has never managed to make anything of the kind. A sprawling low tree on a short, bent and burred stem is as much as one can expect of it. I drag it in willingly, however, because who wants a book, or a person, to be boring and predictable?

Mitchell's pronouncements are worthy of attention, being variously informative, amusing, or provocative. He attacks pet peeves such as acid rain hysteria and the frequent planting of large-size nursery trees. He prefers large-growing species to small ones; he prefers long, clean trunks; and evergreens or conifers seem favored.

On the whole, I love the book, and some of my criticisms are doubtless due to Mitchell' s death before the book was fully polished. The tree accounts are intended to be alphabetic by scientific name, but are only partially so in execution (e.g., *Tsuga* precedes *Torreya*). The accounts often fail to cite the tallest tree specimens, along with the most stout, oldest, fastest, or grandest. For some accounts, deceased champion specimens are cited, though in most only ones currently alive are admitted. Data are sometimes given for growth in the United States, and sometimes not. Such inconsistencies are understandable, given Mitchell's declining health, and could be fixed in a subsequent edition by a competent editor.

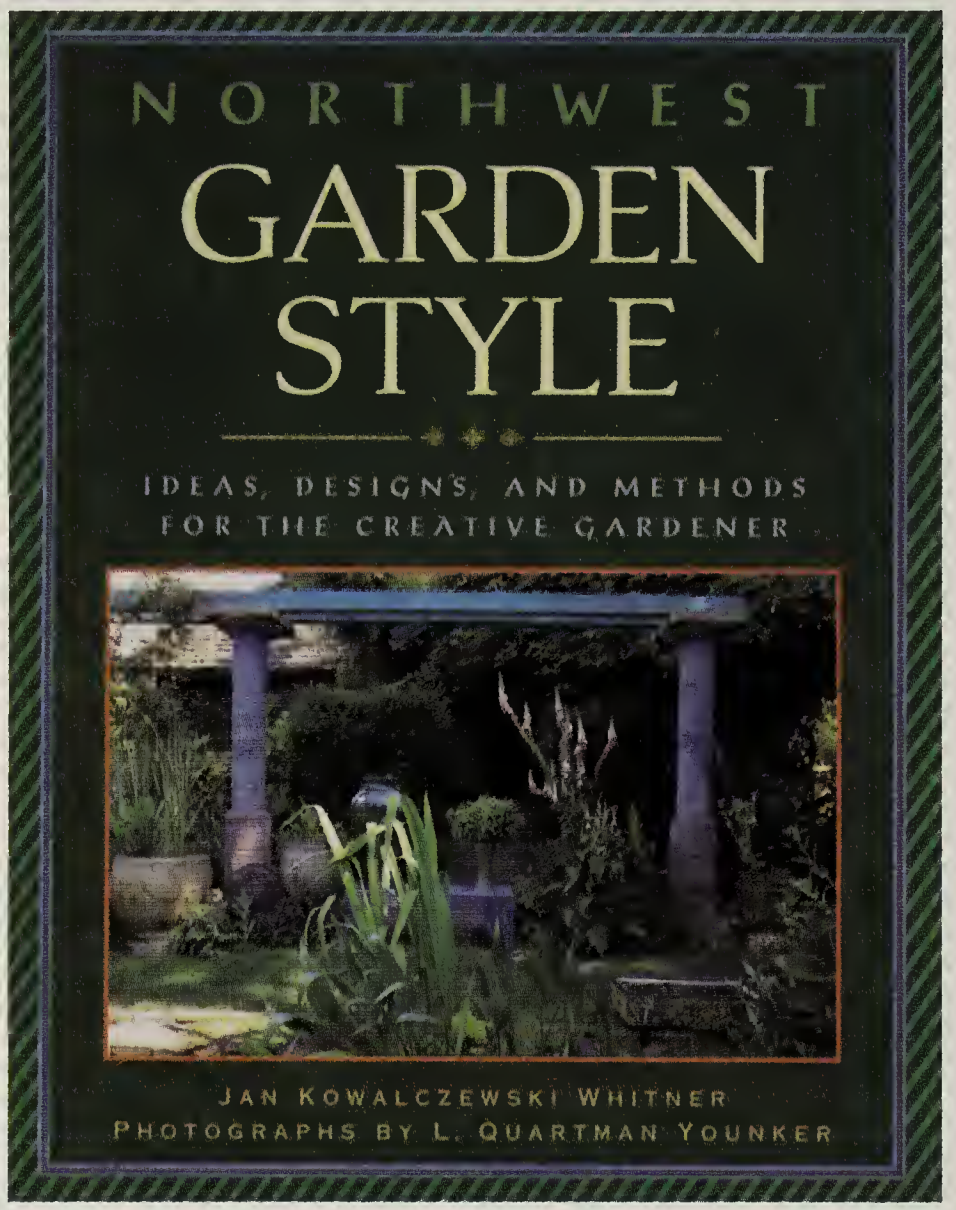
Nonetheless, the book is a valuable resource, on high quality paper, with good photographs and at a fair price. It ends with an annotated list of places to visit notable trees in the British Isles and Ireland, followed by an index. I completely commend *Trees of Britain*, which will help all involved with the planting and care of landscape and forestry trees. It is most assuredly not to be dismissed as "just a book of tree measurements."—*Reviewed by Arthur Lee Jacobson*

Arthur Lee Jacobson is the author of *Trees of Seattle*, *Purple-Leaf Plums*, *Trees of Green Lake*, and *North American Landscape Trees.*

Northwest Garden Style.

Jan Kowalczewski Whitner.
Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 1996.
Paper: $19.95.

American garden style—or at least the label—is something that has eluded North American gardens and gardeners, including those here in the Pacific Northwest. England, Italy, and Japan all have styles identified as uniquely their own. Though America has wildflower prairies, colorful autumns, and evergreen majesty, there has been little talk of the American style of gardening. Now Pacific Northwest gardeners are shown to have a style all their own.



In a practical yet inspiring book, Jan Kowalczewski Whitner not only describes Northwest garden style but explains how it comes about. "Some of our best-designed gardens are simply creative solutions to specific landscaping problems," writes Whitner in her introduction. With this in mind, she assembled outstanding examples of gardens that overcame these problems to show how the "nonprofessional" gardener and reader can create gardens with style.

Enhanced by the lush color photos of L. Quartman Younker, the book visits the gardeners and their gardens designed for almost every landscape. Whitner chose the design topics after reviewing five years' worth of reference questions asked of staff at the Elisabeth Miller Library at the University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture. She then set about learning how Pacific Northwest gardeners dealt with the questions most often asked. The gardens visited cover a range of designs from wetlands to native-plants, small spaces to slopes. A generous acknowledgment of Northwest rose lovers is given to two gardens that show how to "add the roses' delicious blooms, colors, and scents to the garden's sensory mix, but not at the cost of creating still more hybrid tea ghettos."

Not satisfied with paragraphs of description, Whitner knew that garden readers would want the hard facts. She offers side bars in every chapter that detail topography, soil, light, temperature, and rainfall for each garden. Other side bars tell the reader what plants have been selected to enhance the style. For example, the chapter on "hardscapes" suggests which vines will cover garden structures. Botanical and common names are given, along with a brief description. One small confusion arises when two plants from the genus *Mahonia*—lumped in by some taxonomists with *Berberis*—are split up: The species *Mahonia nervosa* and *Berberis aquifolium* should both use either one generic name or the other.

A video of the same name as the book, produced by Puddle Duck Productions and KCTS (Seattle's public television station), features some of the gardens in the book.—*Reviewed by Martha Wingate*

Martha Wingate is a recent graduate of the urban horticulture program, University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture, and a free-lance garden writer. Martha is a new member of the *Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin* editorial board, specializing in proofreading taxonomic nomenclature.

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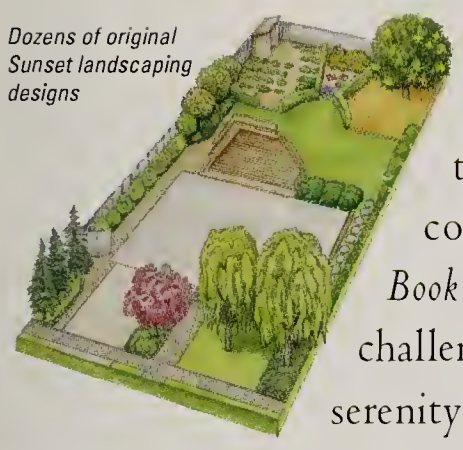

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The Northwest Gardener's Resource Directory, 1995

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